

Message Text

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70

ACTION SY-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ADP-00 USSS-00 NEA-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 M-03 A-01 PRS-01 SS-15 NSC-10 L-03

INR-10 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 /074 W
----- 070791

O 152120 Z MAY 73

FM AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2679

INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, EC, US

SUBJ: REPORTED KIDNAP PLOT

REF: GUAYAQUIL 521

1. BRYFOGLE AND FAMILY RETURNED ON "CALICUCHIMA" THIS MORNING WITHOUT INCIDENT. NAVY BOARDED DURING NIGHT. NAVY AND POLICE EFFECTIVELY COORDINATED PROTECTION AT DOCKSIDE. NOTHING SUSPICIOUS OCCURRED.

2. BRYFOGLE REPORTED THAT ONE OF MEXICAN JOURNALISTS DEVELOPED HIS ACQUAINTANCE DURING FIRST PART OF TRIP AND ENDED UP BY REQUESTING VISA FROM HIM TO VISIT U. S. BRYFOGLE CONFIRMED A REPORT NAVY HAD GIVEN US THAT THE MEXICAN JOURNALISTS ATTEMPTED TO DEPART "CALICUCHIMA" DURING TRIP AND REMAIN AT SAN CRISTOBAL AND THEN SANTA CRUZ. THEY WERE DENIED PERMISSION.

3. ALTHOUGH NAVY WENT ALL OUT TO PROVIDE PROTECTION THEY INDICATED UNWILLINGNESS ARREST ANY STUDENT PREVENTIVELY FOR FEAR ADVERSE STUDENT REACTION OR TO CONFRONT MEXICAN JOURNALISTS BOTH BECAUSE THEY WERE JOURNALISTS (ALLEGEDLY) AND FOR FEAR OF CREATING INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT. NAVY ALSO AFRAID INCIDENT MIGHT GET INTO PRESS THUS HURTING BUSINESS ON "CALICUCHIMA" AS RESULT FEAR BOAT
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MIGHT BE HIJACKED OR PASSENGERS MIGHT BE IN DANGER.

4. NAVY OFFICIAL QUESTIONED LA RAZON REPORTER WHO HAD
ORIGINALLY HEARD STORY FROM STUDENTS. THEY REACHED CONCLUSION
SOMETHING " FISHY" SINCE HE WAS ABLE TO REPEAT A CONSIDERABLE
AMOUNT OF DETAIL HAVING ONLY EAVESDROPPED ON THE CONVERSATION.
THEY HAD DEALT WITH HIM BEFORE AND FOUND HIM LIKELY TO EMBELLISH
HIS STORIES. NEVERTHELESS THEY AGREED ENOUGH DETAILS COINCIDENTLY
RELATED TO OTHER KNOWN FACTS TO CAUSE CONCERN AND ARE CONTINUING
THEIR INVESTIGATIONS.

5. IT SEEMS EITHER WHOLE STORY MAY HAVE BEEN WITHOUT FOUNDATION
OR WOULD- BE KIDNAPPERS WERE FRIGHTENED OFF. IN ANY EVENT, WE ARE
ALL RELIEVED, BUT ARE MAINTAINING OUR GUARD.

6. BOTH NAVY AND POLICE OFFICIALS BELIEVE WE SHOULD NO LONGER BE
CONCERNED AND SHOULD PROCEED AS USUAL. NEVERTHELESS, GROUP WHICH
PLANNED GO BY TAME AIRLINE TO GALAPAGOS FRIDAY (18 MAY) IS
CANCELLING TRIP, OR POSTPONING FOR TWO WEEKS, MAINLY BECAUSE OF
BUILT- UP TENSION WHICH WOULD RUIN TRIP FOR THEM.

7. AM STILL WAITING INFORMATION FROM AIR FORCE ON COMPOSITION OF
FRIDAY' S PASSENGER LIST, NOW AS OF ACADEMIC BUT POSSIBLY
INTELLIGENCE INTEREST.

8. I WILL WRITE LETTERS OF APPRECIATION TO NAVY ZONE AND POLICE
ZONE COMMANDERS.
LUBENSKY

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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